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stamped upon the cover 'Collected and presented to the American library association by S. Hastings Grant, Secretary of the first librarians' convention.'

As some of the letters are written on both sides they should be mounted between bolters' silk; and, as this and the proper binding of the volume will entail some expense, I beg to be permitted to contribute the sum of \$25.00, or so much of it as may be needed for that purpose.

While sentimental reasons might indicate the New York mercantile library, of which my father was for many years librarian, as the depository of this collection, the fact that it is a private library should, I think, outweigh them. It would seem more appropriate to entrust it to the Library of Congress, as a national institution, or to the New York public library, as the convention was held in that city.

Trusting that this offer may be found acceptable, I am

Yours respectfully,
ARTHUR HASTINGS GRANT."

After which it was

Voted, That President Wyer be requested to draft suitable acknowledgment of Mr. Grant's offer, and to state that the Executive board would accept his suggestion made for either of the two libraries he mentioned, but would ask if the A. L. A. Headquarters would not be the proper place as depository for the material left by Mr. Grant's father. Of the two libraries mentioned in Mr. Grant's letter, the Executive board would prefer the Library of Congress.

The PRESIDENT: If there is no objection, this report will take the usual course.

The President announced that the old Canadian folk songs to be sung by Mr. Le Fevre would be rendered during various intervals in the afternoon's program. Mr. Le Fevre then gave two selections.

The PRESIDENT: As you may notice, several of the papers this afternoon bear on Canadian subjects. The idea was that we should have a presentation of Canadian literature—the Canadian English, the Canadian French, and even the Canadian Indian. Much of the Canadian French is in the form of songs. Our next paper is by L. J. BURPEE on the Aberdeen associa-

tion. Unfortunately, Mr. Burpee has been called to Ottawa, but Mr. Roden has kindly consented to read the paper.

THE ABERDEEN ASSOCIATION

Organized at Winnipeg, some twenty years ago, the Aberdeen association stands for a single idea—the distribution of good literature to settlers in isolated parts of Canada. It is absolutely free from all bias, political, social or religious. Its mission is to brighten the lives of Canada's new citizens; to furnish means of recreation and education to those sturdy pioneers who are doing so much to strengthen and enrich the Dominion. It is essentially a Canadian institution, because Canada alone supplies, to any material extent, the conditions under which it exists. It is the public library of the frontier—of the Last West.

Starting from one small center, the Association is now national in scope, with branches in every important city throughout the country, and a central organization at Ottawa. This organization includes, besides the usual executive officers, a strong central Committee, of which the Presidents of branches are *ex-officio* members. It also embraces a central branch, whose principal duty is to act as a collecting and distributing center for the branches, and for the Minto libraries, of which something will be said later. The Secretary of this central branch, who is the only paid officer connected with the Association, looks after all routine correspondence, and has charge of the consolidated mailing list.

In the early years of the Association, its work was confined to the distribution of literature to individual settlers, the value of which is proved by hundreds of grateful letters received at the branches and at headquarters. At the inception of the work, notices were published in all the more important newspapers, especially in the west, explaining the object of the Association, and asking those interested to send in their names. A form was then sent them, with a few questions de-

signed to give necessary information as to the applicant. This bit of newspaper publicity proved so effective that there has been no need to repeat it. Those whose names first went on the mailing list told their friends far and near, until applications began to pour in from every remote corner of the country.

The greatest care has always been taken to study the special needs of each individual, and to that end the work assumed a personal character, which in the end gave it a peculiar value. Each worker in a branch (the workers are all women) was assigned a certain number of names, and thenceforward these recipients of literature were her special charge. She entered into correspondence with her own little group of readers, with no deeper motive in the first instance than to ascertain their tastes and preferences as readers, but out of this has grown what is in many respects the most vital and significant phase of the Association's work. Its success depended inevitably upon the character of the individual worker—upon her tact and sympathy and intuition; but these attributes are not rare among the class of women who have taken up the work of the Aberdeen association. Just consider what this meant, especially to women out on the frontier, where the unutterable loneliness and monotony have driven many into madness! Think what it meant to receive a friendly, sympathetic letter from some one in this new land, with its unfamiliar surroundings; some one who would listen to the tale of hardship and drudgery, and who would understand the homesickness and longing for some spot beyond the seas. Many of these letters are too intimate to go on official files, but those that have been preserved throw an extraordinarily vivid light on the causes and conditions of settlement in a new country. Many a comedy, and many a tragedy, are revealed in these human documents. There is in them the material for a score of novels of life on the frontier of the great Northwest. It is safe to say that this purely incidental work of the Association has been of deeper

service, from a national as well as a humanitarian standpoint, than have any of its other activities.

But to return to the distribution of parcels of literature. The magnitude of this branch of the work may be gathered from the fact that up to the present time nearly half a million parcels of carefully-selected books and magazines have been sent out to settlers in every out-of-the-way quarter of the country. The material is, to a large extent, collected locally by each branch; but much of it comes also from England, where we work in affiliation with the Victoria league. The publishers of magazines often send surplus copies of their periodicals; and special donations are sometimes made, such as one from Mr. W. T. Stead, a few years ago, of 25,000 copies of his cheap reprints of standard books. Material collected in England is carried free to Montreal by the steamship companies. It is classified and arranged by the Central branch at Ottawa; and the railways carry the boxes free to their destination. Finally, the post office carries all the individual parcels of literature free from the branches to their readers. In these ways the Association is saved what would otherwise be a very heavy expenditure for freight and postage.

Reference has been made to the consolidated mailing list. Each of the branches has its own mailing list, and these lists are sent annually to headquarters, where any changes are noted in a card index arranged by locality, covering the entire field of the Association's activities. New applications must be sent to Ottawa for approval, and these are checked with the consolidated mailing list, not merely to prevent any one from drawing parcels from more than one branch, but also to avoid sending too many parcels to the same locality. One of the obligations—or perhaps I might say the only real obligation—imposed on recipients of literature, is that they are to pass the books and magazines on to their neighbors. This obligation is faithfully discharged in most cases; indeed, we have found magazines passed from

hand to hand over a territory of several hundred square miles, until they were reduced to rags and tatters. But there is another reason for exercising care in this matter. Some years ago an inquisitive Postmaster-General stopped an unusually heavy load of mail matter in Ottawa, on its way down to the station to catch the western train, and asked what it was.

"Lady Aberdeen, sir," replied the mail clerk. This passed off as a joke at the expense of the founder of the Association; but we have not always got off so easily. Every now and then the Post office department gets restive over some complaint of a mail car overloaded with Aberdeen parcels, and it takes the combined energies of the executive at Ottawa, especially the feminine part of it, to soothe the irate officials. With the threatened withdrawal of the franking privilege held perpetually over our heads, we keep the pruning knife handy, and lop off every name that cannot justify its presence on the mailing list.

As to the field covered, the policy of the Association is to keep on the crest of every wave of settlement that eats into the unoccupied wilderness. When the Association was organized, our field did not reach much beyond the boundaries of Manitoba. To-day we send literature by canoe or dog-train to the Peace River country, five hundred miles north of Edmonton; we are supplying lumber camps in northern British Columbia, and mining camps in the Yukon; the Aberdeen parcels reach isolated homesteaders and ranchers, trappers and fishermen, in a hundred out-of-the-way corners of the broad Dominion. A special French branch in Montreal looks after the interests of French settlers in the Lake St. John district, and other parts of northern Quebec; and boxes of suitable literature are sent to the Doukhobor colonies, to the Mennonites, Galicians, and other foreign communities in the west. The Halifax branch sends large boxes of magazines to the immigration sheds for distribution among the immigrants landing in Halifax; and to the Sailors' home. It also supplies books and magazines to the sealers and

fishing vessels bound for Labrador and the far north. At the other end of the country, the Vancouver branch makes up boxes of periodicals for the coasting vessels and tramp steamers. Last year a box of literature was sent by the Victoria branch to Pitcairn Island, in the southern Pacific, by one of H. M. ships, on its periodical visit to the island.

Four or five years ago, with the object of meeting changed conditions in the west, it was decided to establish small libraries in newly-settled districts, wherever sufficient population was found to warrant it. This system of libraries—known as the Minto libraries—is still in the experimental stage, but the results so far achieved lead to the belief that the Association may find here an even broader field of usefulness than in the distribution of literature to individual settlers.

About fifty of these libraries have so far been established, principally in the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, and applications for many more are on file, to be filled as soon as the material has been collected. In this, as in other branches of its activities, the Association works in co-operation with the Victoria league, which acts as our agent in England for the collection of books. The procedure is, when an application has been received for one of these libraries, to have a local association formed, which will become responsible for the library. The library must be controlled by, and open to, the community as a whole, not any particular group, religious or otherwise. The local association appoints a librarian, and fills in a form which we supply, giving full particulars as to the area and population of the district, and the general character of the people to be served. On this statement, if the conditions are found satisfactory, we base the selection of books, trying as far as possible to meet the special needs of each district. It is the settled policy of the Association that these libraries should, as population grows, become the nucleus of free public libraries supported by the community in which each has been estab-

lished. In addition to the regular Minto libraries, we have sent collections of books to all the cottage hospitals in the west, to the Gravenhurst sanitarium, to the Columbia coast mission ship, to Dr. Grenfell's Labrador mission, to lumber camps in the north country, from Quebec to the Pacific, and even to the remote posts of the Mounted police on Hudson Bay, and at Herschell Island off the mouth of the Mackenzie River, where American whalers from New England and California help to boost the circulation.

In these ways the Aberdeen association is doing what it can to make Canada's new settlers, wherever they may come from, happier, more contented, and more intelligent citizens.

I have been asked, in connection with this paper, to say a few words about what have been called "floating libraries," in Canada. Fortunately for your patience, I have not material for more than a very general outline. This particular phase of library work in the Dominion may be divided into three sections: Dr. Grenfell's work on the Labrador; the Columbia coast mission on the Pacific coast; and the work of the Upper Canada tract and book society on the Great lakes. Dr. Grenfell, among his innumerable activities on behalf of the primitive fishing folk of the Labrador coast, carries on his little vessel from settlement to settlement a floating library of books and magazines. Mr. Antle performs the same service to the fishing camps of northern British Columbia. At Union Bay, on Vancouver Island, Mr. Kidd has established a free reading room and library, for the people of the settlement and the neighboring islands, and also for the benefit of the ocean steamers that coal here on the outward voyage. He also supplies these ships with books and magazines for the voyage, whenever he can spare them. As the voyages run anywhere from thirty to a hundred days, the reading matter is tremendously appreciated by the crews. He tells me that the books and periodicals are passed around from ship to ship, as they meet in different ports, making the scene a sort of trans-Pacific circulating library.

The work on the Great lakes was started several years ago, and has grown steadily. In the last report of the Upper Canada society particulars are given as to its character and scope, the special object being to reach the sailors of the great inland seas. Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River are looked after from Kingston; Owen Sound is the center for Lake Huron; and Fort William for Lake Superior. Small libraries in special boxes are put on the different lake vessels, and exchanged at the end of each voyage; bags of magazines are also provided, which hang somewhere near the men's bunks. During the past year over 20,000 books and magazines were supplied in this way to the crews of lake vessels. "Realizing," as the Secretary admirably puts it, "that there is nothing so important in character-building for the individual or the nation as good literature, the aim of the society has been to bring such literature within the reach of every man." One cannot wish too great a measure of success to the floating libraries. More power to the elbow of these good men, on the salt seas and the fresh!

The PRESIDENT: You have heard Mr. Burpee's paper. Is there any discussion? I am sorry that Mr. Burpee is not here to answer any inquiries which might be made. We can return for a few moments to the songs of early Canada.

(Mr. Le Fevre sings again.)

The PRESIDENT: We shall now have the opportunity of listening to one of the men of Canada who has carried out an especially interesting library work. Mr. Fitzpatrick, who organized the work, and is still carrying it on, will tell us of what he has done among the lumber camps.

Rev. ALFRED FITZPATRICK, of Toronto, Canada, then described, by the aid of lantern slides, his work with the reading tents among the lumber camps.

He said that books for the tents were secured at the start from private sources, but later the Ontario Department of education initiated a system of camp libraries. Mr. Fitzpatrick spoke of the difficulties of

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conducting the reading tents because of the loss of books and the cost of expressage. Another difficulty was the large number of foreigners in each camp who could not read English books, and so had to be instructed in that language.

Mr. Fitzpatrick said in part:

At present we have nineteen reading tents, seven in Ontario, two in Manitoba, five in Alberta, two in Saskatchewan, and three in British Columbia.

We have never even dreamed of being able to establish this work at all of the camps; that is a Herculean task and can only be performed by the state. We simply profess to experiment in each province, demonstrate the practicability of camp education, and urge the provincial departments of education to take it up and make it a part of the educational system of the provinces.

We are thus gradually winning the confidence of employers and men, and we trust our provincial and your state governments will take this matter up in the not too distant future and extend their systems of education to the camps—the first point of contact with the foreign immigrant. This would keep him at the camps, away from the towns and cities, and would help solve the slum problem of the cities. It would place the immigrant on a footing of equality with English speaking citizens, and would encourage him to settle in the country, bring his family and invest his money here instead of sending it home as he so often does.

This would be in the interest of the government—of the country generally, and the state ought to act. We boast of our great systems of education. Surely these systems are wieldy enough to adapt themselves to the needs of the boys in our frontier camps. There is no reason why a boy's education should end with the public school. We should follow him to the woods and mines, to the farthest confines of the earth. Every state and every province on this continent has made money out of the lumber industry, out of its railroads and mines, indirectly if

not always directly, and we owe the woodsman, miner, and fisherman an education.

I am glad to be able to tell you that Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia co-operate with our Association in this work, and we hope some day they will assume full responsibility, as they alone have the necessary machinery to carry it on, and they alone can do it satisfactorily.

The PRESIDENT: Are there any questions? If not, we can return once more to Old Canada.

(Mr. Le Fevre again sings.)

The PRESIDENT: The report of the Committee on resolutions is in order.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS

Resolved, That the grateful thanks of the Association are due to the Michigan library association for its hospitality, and especially to those of its members who took part in the exercises of the opening day.

Resolved, That the Association learns with gratification of the improved health of its former President, Mr. Frederick M. Crunden, and earnestly hopes that at no distant date it may again have the benefit of his presence and his counsel.

Resolved, That in the death of Mr. Deloraine P. Corey, this Association has lost a faithful friend and tireless worker in its behalf. He was for many years the leading figure in that group of library trustees, always too small, who have regularly attended the meetings of the Association and taken an active part in its work. In particular, his services as Trustee of the Endowment fund were conspicuously useful.

Respectfully submitted,

W. N. C. CARLTON,
A. E. BOSTWICK,
NINA K. PRESTON.

Mr. MONTGOMERY moved that the resolutions be adopted, which was done by a rising vote.